



CLARK COUNTY BOARD OF FREEHOLDERS

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May 28, 2014

Tom Mielke
Chair, Board of County Commissioners
1300 Franklin St.
Vancouver, WA 98665

Dear Commissioner Mielke,

On behalf of the Board of Freeholders, I want to thank you for your support of the home rule charter process and those of us elected to draft a home rule charter. Your leadership was crucial to bringing this opportunity to the voters and putting the wheels of democracy in motion.

Thank you, too, for the county's generosity. You have hosted all but two of our 12 meetings in the Public Service Center and afforded the Board of Freeholders talented county employees to assist members, particularly me as chair. The county's financial support has been greatly appreciated. The money has allowed the board to afford the services of county GIS experts, a professional finish to the charter by Code Publishing, and a photographer's services for a portrait of the Board of Freeholders for posterity.

The proposed charter provides for five main changes to county governance. They are:


- Creating a County Council/County Manager form of government. The charter clearly delineates roles and responsibilities of the elected County Council and appointed County Manager. The County Council will deal with budget, legislative and policy issues and the County Manager will focus on implementation of those policies and administrative duties.
- Broadening the base of elected representation with five County Council members instead of three County Commissioners.
- Electing four County Council members by district in both the primary and general election and one council member at large to serve as chair.

- Increasing the voice of voters through Initiative and Referendum powers. Each will be limited as required by state law.
- Providing periodic review and potential amendment of the charter, which will allow the document to meet the county's future needs. The first review will be five years after the charter is approved, and then every 10 years thereafter. Members of future Charter Review Commissions will be elected.

As you know, the Board of Freeholders dissolved last night after members voted on the full document. As the former chair, I would be willing and able to appear before the Board of County Commissioners to summarize the freeholders' work and answer any questions you or other board members may have. Please feel free to call me.

Again, I and the other members of the 2013-2014 Board of Freeholders thank you for your vision and support of the home rule charter process. The voters elected a diverse group of citizens who have worked effectively together to offer Clark County voters an opportunity to consider changes in the structure of county government.

Sincerely yours,



Nan A. Henriksen